

BOOK REVIEWS

THE WESTERN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE does not review all books sent to it by the publishers. A list of new books received is carried in the Advertising Section.

RECENT ADVANCES IN PLASTIC SURGERY—Number One— Edited by James Calnan, FRCP, FRCS, Professor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, University of London, Royal Postgraduate Medical School and Hammersmith Hospital, London. Longman Inc., 19 West 44th Street, New York City (10036), 1976. 210 pages, \$28.50.

The tenor of this book is set by the editor in his preface when he says that any technique or understanding of disease that benefits the patient is an advance, and that anything new in the past five years can be considered recent. Therefore, one should not expect anything startling or really new when reading the book. However, one may indeed arrive at a better understanding of some areas of plastic surgery.

The chapters on the rheumatoid hand are very worthwhile in view of an increasingly older population. The use of prosthetic joints and the extension of various tendon transplants in combination with joint reconstruction hold promise for many of these patients. Probably, the best chapter follows and is that relative to speech, particularly the nasal escape of air, written by the editor. The discussion of cleft palate repair and flap pharyngoplasty is only a postscript in an otherwise excellent presentation.

The discussion of automobile injuries holds nothing new and constitutes only a review. The same is true of the chapter devoted to a statistical survey of burn admissions.

There is a discussion of the organization of plastic surgical services in urban guerrilla warfare which is very interesting but includes nothing relative to advances in plastic surgery.

A handy pocket reference can be found in the chapter on chronically swollen legs. However, this topic is more thoroughly discussed in other books and papers. The same evaluation can be made of the material on conservative treatment of leg ulcers.

There is an excellent review on the planning and design of pedicle flaps along axial blood supply patterns. The use of free flaps is touched upon. However, these are still in the realm of laboratory research surgical procedures. Their wide use in clinical plastic surgery will depend upon the development of better and more easily used microsurgical techniques.

Finally, the last two chapters deal with cancer and its treatment by massive surgical resection and reconstruction and the use of radiation therapy. The methods and techniques discussed are those used in many medical centers in recent years.

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CONTROVERSY IN CARDIOLOGY—The Practical Clinical Approach— Edited by Edward K. Chung, MD, Professor of Medicine, Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University, and Director of the Heart Station, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia. Springer-Verlag New York Inc., 175 Fifth Avenue, New York City (10010), 1976. 299 pages, with 99 figures, \$29.80.

The title of the book brings to mind the eminently successful volumes *Controversies in Medicine* edited by Ingelfinger and associates, and the popular sessions of the annual meetings of the American College of Cardiology "Controversies in Cardiology." In these, one author, or one speaker, respectively, presents a viewpoint and another an opposite viewpoint. In the above named

book, one of the editors writes a comment after the presentations facilitating the reader's perception of the controversy. One would expect this book to follow the pattern, but it does not. The editor elected to ask *one* writer to present both sides of the controversy.

The book consists of 19 chapters, each dealing with a "controversial" subject. Some of the subjects are obviously controversial but a good many are not, at least not in the ordinary sense, since one can find hardly a subject in which there would not be a difference of opinion on one point or another. In the former category one can place "Prophylactic antiarrhythmic therapy in acute myocardial infarction," "Anticoagulant therapy for coronary heart disease" or "Indications for coronary artery surgery and patient selection." Examples of the latter category are "Serum digoxin level—Practical value," "Current concepts of hemiblocks" or "Echocardiography—Its practical value."

Seven of the 19 articles are written by the editor with the aid of his fellows and associates—acting as a jack of all trades. Most of the others are written by well-known authorities on the given subject. The problem here is that most of these authors have certain prejudices or commitments to a specific viewpoint—some even have vested interests in it—which makes it hardly possible to present a balanced view of the subject.

Disregarding the objectives of the book and reading some of the articles per se one can find excellent and informative summaries of less controversial subjects. However, in the light of the stated objectives of presenting the "pro and con" viewpoints in each chapter, the book is poorly conceived and badly executed. The editor's immodest postulate that "the book will be extremely valuable to all practicing physicians with various backgrounds" is not fulfilled and the book is not recommended.

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ENDOSCOPY—Edited by George Berci, MD, Director, Department of Endoscopy, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles; Attending Surgeon, Wadsworth Veterans Administration Hospital, Los Angeles; Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Surgery, University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine; with 58 coauthors. Appleton-Century-Crofts, A Publishing Division of Prentice-Hall, Inc., 292 Madison Avenue, New York City (10017), 1976. 805 pages, \$78.50.

This comprehensive and up-to-date reference work covers all aspects of endoscopy and should be of interest to persons in many different specialties. There are a few color plates that illustrate endoscopic findings, but certainly this book is not what one would consider a comprehensive atlas of endoscopic photographs. It is, rather, meant to be a thorough review of the technical aspects of endoscopy, and fills a definite need in this area.

The first part of the text relates to general principles of endoscopy. Such topics as optical principles; fiber-optic physics; light sources; various types of instruments, both rigid and fiberoptic; microbiology, and sterilization of endoscopes are included. In addition the technical aspects of ultrasound, laser beam surgical procedures and electrosurgery are covered in detail. Photography and television as they apply to endoscopy are also reviewed.

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The second part of the book relates to clinical applications. The various types of gastrointestinal endoscopy are well covered, including newer procedures such as endoscopic polypectomy, choledochoscopy and retrograde cholangiopancreatography. Pediatric endoscopy as well as laparoscopy also are well covered. Sections on both gynecologic endoscopy and thoracic endoscopy are fairly extensive and procedures using both rigid and fiberoptic flexible instruments are discussed. Special topics including nephroscopy, arthroscopy, stereoencephaloscopy and retroperitoneoscopy are also covered. These subjects are discussed by specialists in their respective fields and there are 58 coauthors. It is a very readable book and should be an invaluable reference work.

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THE MITRAL VALVE—A Pluridisciplinary Approach—Edited by Daniel Kalmanson, MD, Director of Clinical Teaching, Chief, Department of Cardiology, Cardiovascular Research Center ARNTIC, Foundation A. de Rothschild, Paris. Publishing Sciences Group Inc., 162 Great Rd., Acton, MA (01720), 1976. 576 pages, \$25.00.

Daniel Kalmanson, MD, has collected in one book the major scientific papers presented at the International Symposium on the Mitral Valve held in Paris in May of 1975. His purpose is to present the latest information on the mitral heart valve acquired in many different disciplines and to integrate these data into one comprehensive work. The scientific papers which make up the 48 chapters of this book are divided into ten sections in a logical order of presentation. Each chapter is followed by a general discussion and a summary of important points.

Part one reviews the anatomy and physiology of the mitral valve apparatus and presents a new classification by Yacoula which permits accurate identification of individual chordae. The present trend toward a broader and more functional concept of the normal and the diseased mitral apparatus is presented. Part two discusses the pathology of natural and artificial mitral valves, including the prolapsing mitral valve leaflet syndrome. Parts three, four and five present pressure-flow relationships and motion of normal, diseased and artificial valves. The utilization of electromagnetic, ultrasonic and differential pressure transducer techniques for measuring blood velocity and blood flow across the mitral valve are discussed. The importance of a knowledge of instantaneous mitral flow rate and velocity for understanding mitral valve physiology, pathophysiology and surgical correction is demonstrated. Emphasis is placed on new data obtained by electromagnetic, Doppler and ultrasonic investigations. Roelandt discusses the quantitation of mitral regurgitation using a gated Doppler technique.

The role of atrial and ventricular performances and particularly the time course and optimal timing for mitral valve operation is discussed in part 7. A major section of the work is devoted to artificial valves (Part 8), tissue valves (Part 9) and reconstructive surgical procedures on the natural heart valve (Part 10). The book concludes that the ideal prosthetic mitral valve remains to be developed and all of the types used at present are plagued by the risk of thromboembolic complications. Mitral valve replacement, therefore, should only be undertaken when all other possibilities are ruled out.

With tissue valves there is reported to be a lower risk of thromboembolism and anticoagulation is not

required, but these valves do not possess the durability of prosthetic heart valves. Tissue valves are recommended for pulmonary and tricuspid valve replacement in all patients, for aortic and mitral valve replacement in women of child-bearing age, and for use in patients who may be difficult or dangerous to maintain on anticoagulation. Recognizing the inadequacy of both artificial and tissue valves, Drs. Carpentier (France), Dury and Angell (United States) maintain that as many as 40 percent of the mitral valve abnormalities need not be replaced but can in fact be repaired utilizing reconstructive surgical techniques. The technique of prosthetic ring annuloplasty described by Carpentier and co-workers represents a major accomplishment in mitral valve surgical operation. The procedure, however, may be technically more difficult to carry out correctly than valve replacement.

In spite of the wide range of the presentations and the complexity of the topics, the book provides an integrated approach to understanding the normal and abnormal mitral valvular apparatus. It is an important reference source for all those interested in the mitral valvular abnormalities.

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PERINATAL MEDICINE—4th European Congress of Perinatal Medicine—Edited by Z. K. Stembera, K. Poláček and V. Sabata; Co-editors: P. M. Dunn, H. F. R. Prechtl and E. Saling. Publishing Sciences Group Inc., 162 Great Rd., Acton, MA (01720), 1975. 556 pages, \$25.00.

This book presents a series of abstracts from the biennial congress of the European Association of Perinatal Medicine held in 1974 in Prague, Czechoslovakia. The editors have chosen three of the major topics and included abstracts related to these topics along with the chairman's conclusions on each. The topics include (1) antenatal diagnosis of the "at risk" infant, (2) premature delivery and (3) preterm infant.

Czechoslovakia has a low perinatal mortality rate and so was an appropriate host country. Participation in this fourth congress showed the continued and significant growth of interests and organization of European perinatologists. The participants represented about every country in eastern and western Europe along with several American contributors.

Each major topic is given approximately equal length in this book. Considering the abstract format, the illustrations are very good; but as expected, the text, methods and references are limited. The abstracts on these topics represent a review of most of the techniques available in evaluating at-risk infants and touched on most of the current knowledge as of 1974. A series of papers evaluated at-risk infants at one, two, four and more years later. The concluding remarks appropriately noted many of the infants so identified turn out to be normal, so that further work is needed to better define those newborn infants with significant future risk factors.

The major problem with this type of publication is centered on its abstract form. This form, of necessity, is too brief to give anything but an overview of current work. The audience that would most benefit from this book would be perinatologists. I believe that in this book there is very little present dating from the 1974 congress that would be new to a perinatologist who keeps up with the literature.

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